

Magonia

contemporary **vision** and **belief**

NUMBER 93 • SEPTEMBER 2006

► Draw a picture and write a story about your Imaginary Friend...



My imaginary friend is
so invisible. Abe
Naven looks like he's invisible.
Does he like me?

**IMAGINARY
FRIENDS**

Maybe it's more than just
imagination

says Mike Holloway,

and Curtis Pecbles uncovers the truth behind President
Eisenhower's meeting with some very imaginary friends



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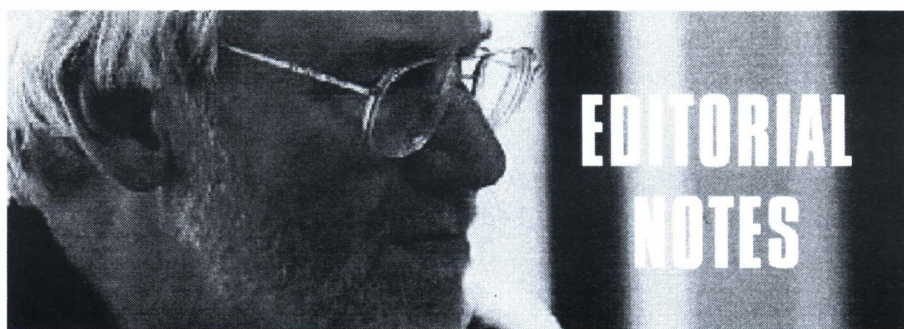
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IN A THOUGHTFUL piece in the most recent issue of *International UFO Reporter*, published by the J Allen Hynek Center for UFO Studies, the magazine's editor and UFO historian Jerome Clark, attempts to define a 'core' UFO phenomenon distinct from the wide range of associated phenomena which have accrued around ufology over the past sixty years. [1]

In returning to the roots of the phenomena, Clark identifies Charles Fort as being the founding father of ufology, a point on which I tend to agree with him, although it's a view which will not be accepted by many contemporary ufologists who see the UFO phenomenon developing out of military involvement in the wake of WWII and the growth of the Cold War and find Fort and his literary ramblings rather embarrassing.

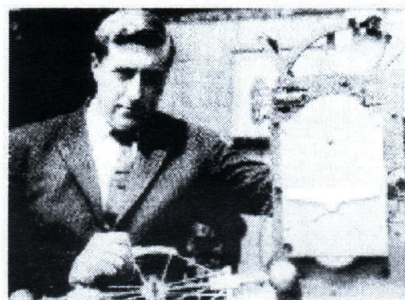
Fort was certainly the person most heavily responsible for the creation of a (more-or-less) unified study of anomalies. Before Fort, although such anomalous events were comprehensively reported, commented on and even investigated, there was no overall framework into which such events could be slotted. Before Fort (that sounds like the basis of a calendrical system, and indeed one of Fort's followers did attempt such a thing!) there were certainly books of mysteries and wonders. Victorian writers such as Sabine Baring Gould published dozens of books collecting mysteries and marvels: *Freaks of Fanaticism*, *Curious Myths of the Middle Ages* were typical of Gould's works. In Fort's own era the English writer Rupert Gould's two books, *Oddities* and *Enigmas* covered many of the topics which we now consider 'Fortean': the 'Devil's Hoof-marks',

the moving coffins of Barbados, the Barisal guns, etc.

But these writers treated anomalous phenomena as just that; anomalous, and they made no attempt to provide an overall explanation for the events they described. As far as organisations such as the [British] Society for Psychical Research was concerned, the phenomena they investigated largely involved, in their eyes, either the survival of bodily death, or unknown but natural powers of the human brain.

But Fort was different; as Clark points out: "Rather than present his findings as samples of random oddities, he incorporated them – his often

tongue-in-cheek prose masking genuine conviction – into a vision of extraterrestrial wayfarers engaged in all kinds of baffling activities: dropping organic and inorganic substances out of the blue, seeding the earth with mysterious archaeological artefacts [something Fort himself attempted in his youth – JR], causing persons and vessels to



**Commander Rupert T. Gould,
collector of oddities and authority
on clocks**

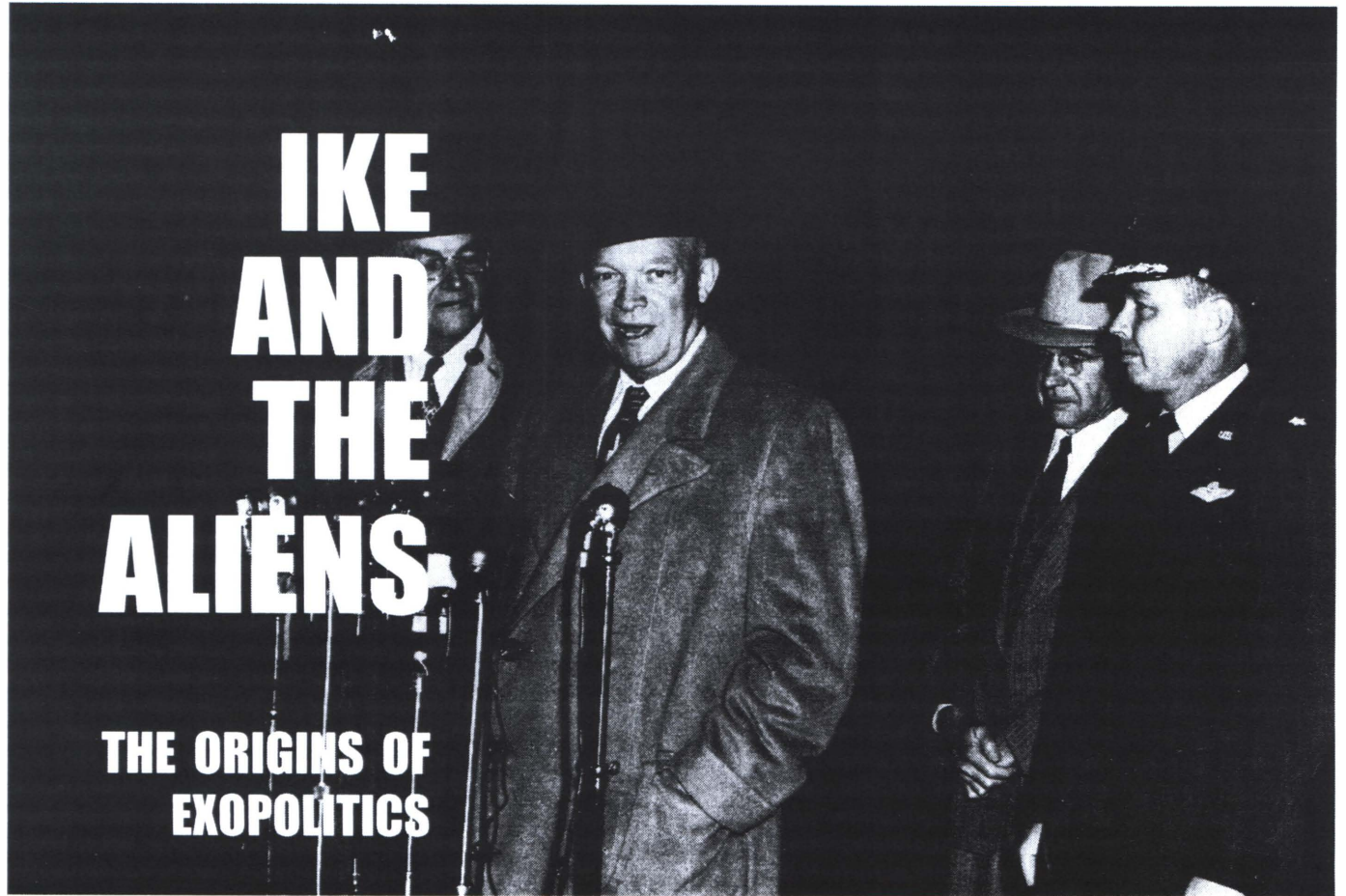
vanish, and – not incidentally – all the while being mistaken for ghosts, demons, gods, fairies, and ocean-going saurians."

Fate magazine was crucial in promoting the early UFO stories, but, Clark points out, "*Fate* (whose initial issue saw print less than a year after Arnold's encounter), also covered Fortean and psychic occurrences and engaged in freewheeling occult-tinged speculation", and he concludes that most of its readers "probably read *Fate*'s contents indiscriminately, in the implicit assumption that one 'true story' is as good as another".

Continued on page 19 >>

IKE AND THE ALIENS

THE ORIGINS OF
EXOPOLITICS



CURTIS PEEBLES

In late February of 1954, President Dwight D. Eisenhower was enjoying a golf vacation in Palm Springs, California. After dinner on Saturday, February 20, 1954, Eisenhower left the resort unexpectedly. The reporters covering his vacation learned of his absence, and an Associated Press reporter issued a news bulletin saying "Pres. Eisenhower died tonight of a heart attack in Palm Springs." Two minutes later, the report was retracted. The following morning, Sunday, February 21, 1954, the president attended a church service, very much alive. His spokesman said that Eisenhower had seen a dentist after chipping a cap on a tooth while eating a chicken wing at dinner. [1]

It was a letter from Gerald Light to Meade Layne, director of the Borderland Sciences Research Associations that turned the incident into a flying saucer story that would still be retold a half century later. The letter was received by Layne on April 16, 1954 and read:

"My dear Friends: I have just returned from Muroc. The report is true – devastatingly true!

"I made the journey in company with

Franklin Allen of the Hearst papers and Edwin Nourse of Brookings Institute (Truman's erstwhile financial advisor) and Bishop MacIntyre (sic) of L.A. (confidential names, for the present, please.)

"When we were allowed to enter the restricted section, (after about six hours in which we were checked on every possible item, event, incident and aspect of our personal and public lives) I had the distinct feeling that the world had come to an end with fantastic realism. For I have never seen so many human beings in a state of complete collapse and confusion as they realized that their own world had indeed ended with such finality as to beggar description. The reality of the 'otherplane' aeroforms is now and forever removed from the realms of speculation and made a rather painful part of the consciousness of every responsible scientific and political group.

"During my two days visit I saw five separate and distinct types of aircraft being studied and handled by our air-force officials – with the assistance and permission of The Etherians! I have no

words to express my reactions.

"It has finally happened. It is now a matter of history.

"President Eisenhower, as you may already know, was spirited over to Muroc one night during his visit to Palm Springs recently. And it is my conviction that he will ignore the terrific conflict between the various 'authorities' and go directly to the people via radio and television – if the impasse continues much longer. From what I could gather, an official statement to the country is being prepared for delivery about the middle of May. I will leave it to your own excellent powers of deduction to construct a fitting picture of the mental and emotional pandemonium that is now shattering the consciousness of hundreds of our scientific 'authorities' and all the pundits of the various specialized knowledges that make up our current physics.

"In some instances I could not stifle a wave of pity that arose in my own being as I watched the pathetic bewilderment of rather brilliant brains struggling to make some sort of rational explanation which would enable them to retain their familiar theories and concepts. And I thanked my own destiny for having long ago pushed me into the metaphysical woods and compelled me to find my way out. To watch strong minds cringe before totally irreconcilable aspects of 'science' is not a pleasant thing. I had forgotten how commonplace such things as dematerialization of 'solid' objects had become to my own mind. The coming and going of an etheric, or spirit, body has been so familiar to me these many years I had just forgotten that such a manifestation could snap the mental balance of a man not so conditioned. I shall never forget those forty-eight hours at Muroc!" [2]

Word of Light's letter soon spread among UFO believers. Desmond Leslie mentioned the story several months later. He had visited Los Angeles during the summer of 1954. Reportedly, this included investigations in the Edwards AFB area. Leslie was interviewed by George Hunt Williamson on October 9, 1954 for *Valor* magazine. Leslie said that "an Air Force man" told him that the "rumored saucer at Muroc was actually there," and that it was under guard "in Hangar 27." He continued that "President Eisenhower had a 'look-see' at the craft during his Palm Springs vacation." Leslie's source had "seen the craft," and also said that "on a certain day...suddenly men coming back from leave were not allowed to go back on the base and were given orders to 'get

lost.'" Leslie added that the personnel on the base that day were not allowed to leave under any circumstances. [3]

● The Roswell Incident

The rebirth of the Ike and the aliens story began with Charles Berlitz and William L. Moore's book *The Roswell Incident*. Published in 1980, this did not simply revive the nearly forgotten story of a saucer crash, but eventually would give rise to the Darkside mythology and exopolitics. For all its later impact, *The Roswell Incident* itself was rather "thin." The book recounted the story of Maj. Jesse A. Marcel, the intelligence officer of the 509th Bomb Wing at Roswell AAF in July 1947. Marcel described the recovery of strange debris, which he described as being pieces of parchment-like material and balsa-like sticks with pink and purple "hieroglyphics." These fragments could not be broken or burned. There were also large metal parts which could not be dented or creased. Marcel did not claim to have seen a crashed saucer or alien bodies, only the strange debris. [4]

The bulk of *The Roswell Incident* consisted of recollections and stories that had little or no direct connection to Marcel's alleged experiences. Canadian radio engineer Wilbert B. Smith was one such source. He had written a Top Secret memo in November 1950 on U.S. government involvement with flying saucers. Smith said in the memo that flying saucers were the mostly highly classified subject in the U.S., even more so than the hydrogen bomb.

Berlitz and Moore also discussed an account written by Meade Layne around 1949, which was alleged to be based on information from two scientists and "a business man of high standing." "Dr. Weidberg," described as a physics professor from an unnamed California university, was said to have taken part in the examination of the saucer. According to Layne, the professor said it was "shaped like a turtle's back" and had a cabin about 15 feet in diameter. Layne's account continued:

"The bodies of six occupants were seared...and the interior of the disc had been badly damaged by intense heat. One porthole had been shattered...."

"An autopsy on one body showed that it resembled a normal human body except in size. One body was seated at what appeared to be a control desk, there were a few 'gadgets' in front of him, and on the walls or panels characters in writing, in a language unknown to any of the investigators. They said it was unlike anything known to them, and definitely not Russian..."

He added that Dr. Weidberg had indicated that the saucer was taken by truck from the crash site to Magdalena, New Mexico. The UFO was then loaded on a special car of the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe railroad. The train's route passed through Belen, Grants, and Gallup, New Mexico, then to Flagstaff, Arizona and continued on to Needles and Cadiz in California, before finally arriving at Muroc, where "Camp Edwards" was located. [5]

The Roswell Incident included a chapter on "The President and the Captured Saucer." Berlitz and Moore claim that information about the saucer crash at Roswell was initially withheld from Eisenhower even after he became president. Berlitz and Moore further claimed that Eisenhower "was let in on the secret as one of the first of a small but carefully selected group of scientific, military, and civilian personnel from all walks of life..." The goal, Berlitz and Moore wrote, was "...possibly for the purpose of gauging from their observed reactions what the effect on the general public would likely be if such a story was released."

Berlitz and Moore continued that "the mental confusion and near pandemonium," described in Light's account, resulted "...in a total victory for the forces of secrecy." They also claimed that the individuals who were shown the saucer were silenced and plans for a public announcement were dropped. Light's description of his experiences at "Muroc" was not judged to be a security threat, as the story would not "stick" if it were published. [6]

● MJ-12, the Darkside, and Exopolitics

The publication of *The Roswell Incident* came at a time when the flying saucer myth was undergoing fundamental changes. During the early and mid-1980s, stories spread of crashed saucers, "Grays," cattle and human mutilations, abductions, implants, creation of alien/human hybrids, alien underground bases, secret treaties between the U.S. and the aliens, technology exchanges, and of a shadowy organization called "MJ-12" which was overseeing it all. [7]

This became known as the "Darkside," and was defined by Milton William Cooper in his manifesto, "The Secret Government The Origin, Identity and Purpose of MJ-12." Cooper claimed his account was based on documents he had seen between 1970 and 1973 while a Navy enlisted man. This included the story of the meeting between Ike and

the aliens, and the claim of a secret treaty.

According to Cooper, radio communications was established with a group of "large-nosed Gray aliens." This resulted in a landing at Holloman AFB by these aliens in early 1954. During this first face-to-face meeting, a basic agreement was worked out, and arrangements made for a formal treaty. A second landing by the aliens at Edwards AFB followed in February 1954. Cooper wrote that Eisenhower arranged to be in Palm Springs on vacation. On the planned day, the president was secretly taken to Edwards, with the dental visit as a cover story. Cooper continued, "President Eisenhower met with the aliens and a formal treaty between the Alien Nation and the United States of America was signed."

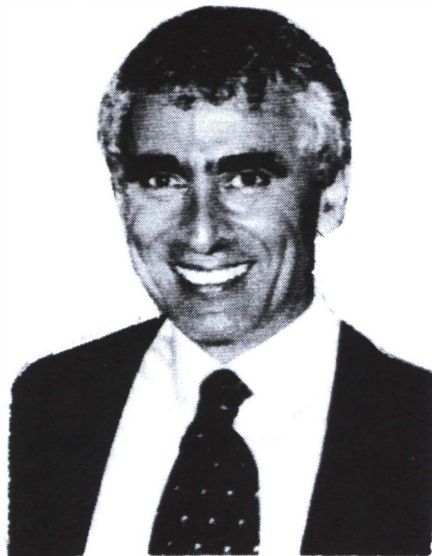
Cooper claimed that the treaty allowed the aliens to abduct a limited number of humans for the purpose of medical examination. The abductees would not be harmed, would be returned to the place they were taken from, and would have no memory of what had happened. The aliens would provide to MJ-12 a list of all the humans who were abducted. In exchange, the U.S. government would be supplied with advanced alien technology. The aliens' existence would also be kept secret by the U.S. government, and underground bases would be built for the aliens. Cooper further claimed that the U.S. government realized by 1955 that the aliens had violated the treaty. Both humans and animals were mutilated, a full list of abducted humans was not being provided to MJ-12 by the aliens, and not all the abductees were being returned.

While on the surface Cooper was writing about flying saucers and aliens, the bulk of the text was actually Rightist conspiracy theories. This involved the Bilderburgers, which, Cooper said, controlled the Council on Foreign Relations and the Trilateral Commission. Between them, he continued, these groups "...control the major foundations, all of the major media and publishing interests, the largest banks, all the major corporations, the upper echelons of the government, and many other vital interests."

This conspiracy, according to Cooper, amounted to a secret world government. It was responsible for the deaths of both Secretary of Defense James Forrestal and President John F. Kennedy. It controlled the world's drug trade, was responsible for crime in American cities, and used disinformation against UFO researchers. It created



Bill Cooper (above) promoted a conspiracy theory which, ostensibly about flying saucers was actually a right-wing theory of world control by such organisations as Bilderburg and the Council on Foreign relations. Michael Salla (below) wove the same concepts into a Leftist theory of 'exopolitics' anti-war movement, environmentalism, opposition to ballistic missile defences, the wide-spread acceptance of conspiracy theories, and the post-Cold War meeting of political extremes.



AIDS and other diseases in order to reduce the world's population. The conspiracy had plans to round up all "dis-senters" and ship them off to vast concentration camps which had already been built. The enslavement of humanity would then be complete. Cooper concluded by writing, "We must force disclosure of all the facts, discover the truth and act upon the truth." [8]

By the mid-1990s, Cooper abandoned Ufology and became a leading figure in the Militia movement. He was killed on November 6, 2001 in a shootout with Arizona police officers. [9] Cooper's lasting contribution was the Darkside mythology, which was enshrined in popular culture by such television shows as *The X-Files* and *Dark Skies*. While the Right had been the first to embrace the Darkside, the mythology was also soon being accepted by the Left.

Ufology in the context of a Leftist political movement began in the early 1990s, against the backdrop of the collapse of communism, the fall of the Soviet Union, and the end of the Cold War. By the start of the 21st century, this movement became known as "exopolitics." This was "...the study of the key political actors, institutions and processes associated with the UFO phenomenon and the extraterrestrial hypothesis." [10]

Several individuals emerged as the major figures in this movement. They included Steven Greer and Alfred Webre. Like Cooper, they claimed the world was actually run by a secret cabal. Greer said that this was "a committee of 200 to 300 people" involving senior U.S. government, military, and intelligence officials, "the Liechtenstein banking family," the "Mormon corporate empire," and "cells within the Vatican." They had murdered Marilyn Monroe and former CIA director William Colby to keep them from talking, and used an "electromagnetic weapon" to cause Greer and others to be stricken with cancer. [11] Greer also claimed UFO groups were controlled by the conspiracy. He said in an interview that "deep-cover black project operatives are working closely with alleged civilian researchers, journalists, and the UFO glitterati." [12]

While Cooper had focused exclusively on an overarching conspiracy, the major figures in exopolitics also offered a messianic vision of the future once disclosure had come about. Greer said that the alien technology "would empower a new human civilization without want, poverty or environmental damage." He continued that "there is no limit to what humanity can achieve."

[13] Webre implied that disclosure would result in a fundamental transformation of human beings. He said, "We are a nucleus of politically sensitive terrestrials who are aware that the playing field is vast.... Fundamentally the transformation starts within all of us - for we are the transformation. We are the exogovernment. We are the new Universal human." [14]

● Research Study #8

In 2003, a new figure in exopolitics emerged. This was Dr. Michael E. Salla, a researcher in residence at American University's Center for Global Peace. He was also the director of the Peace Ambassadors Program, which the university's web site described as a "summer program that combines study, meditative practices, and prayer ceremonies at selected Washington, D.C. sites aimed at promoting individual self-empowerment and Divine Governance in Washington, D.C." Salla received his PhD in Government from the University of Queensland, Australia, and an MA degree in Philosophy from the University of Melbourne, Australia. He had written extensively on conflict resolution, conducted fieldwork in East Timor, Kosovo, Macedonia, and Sri Lanka, and organized international workshops on these conflicts. [15]

Salla began writing a series of papers on exopolitics in January of 2003. These seem to have attracted little interest from either the American University staff or among UFO believers. This changed with Research Study #8, dated January 28, 2004. It was titled "Eisenhower's 1954 Meeting With Extraterrestrials: The Fiftieth Anniversary of America's First Treaty With Extraterrestrials?"

The paper began with Eisenhower's disappearance, and repeated the story of Gerald Light's letter about his visit to Muroc with the group of distinguished public figures to see the saucers. Salla mentioned that Light was an "elderly mystic," but stressed the physiological reactions described in Light's letter. Salla further argued that Light, Nourse, Cardinal McIntyre and Allen "would certainly have been plausible choices for a community delegation..."

He noted that Dr. Edwin Nourse could "provide his expertise on the possible economic impact of First Contact with extraterrestrials." Cardinal James McIntyre would have been, according to Salla, "an important gauge for the possible reaction from religious leaders generally, and in particular from the most influential and powerful religious

institution on the planet - the Roman Catholic Church." Franklin Allen, then an 80-year-old former reporter with the Hearst Newspaper Group, was described as "...a good choice for a member of the press who could maintain confidentiality."

Salla wrote that, "The four represented senior leaders of the religious, spiritual, economic and newspaper communities and were well advanced in age and status." Salla mentioned the possibility that Light may have used their names "in a fabricated account of an 'out of body' experience," but continued that "...there is nothing in Light's selection that eliminates the possibility that they were plausible members of such a delegation." Salla concluded that this provided, "...circumstantial evidence that a meeting with extraterrestrials occurred and that Eisenhower was present."

Cardinal James McIntyre would have been, according to Salla, "an important gauge for the possible reaction from religious leaders generally, and in particular from the most influential and powerful religious institution on the planet - the Roman Catholic Church."



Salla then turned to "testimonials" which supported the story of Eisenhower's meeting with the aliens. Not surprisingly, Cooper had the central role, and Salla quoted extensively from his writings. Cooper was not the only person to claim to know about the incident, however, according to Salla. Another was Dr. Michael Wolf, who claimed to have been involved with several policy-making committees dealing with the alien presence over a period of twenty-five years. He stated that the Eisenhower administration had signed a treaty with an alien race, but that this treaty had not been submitted for congressional ratification, as required by the U.S. Constitution.

A third individual was Phil Schneider, described as "a former geological engineer that was employed by corporations contracted to build underground bases." Salla stated that his knowledge about the treaty "would have come from his familiarity with a range of compartmentalized black projects and interaction with other personnel working with extraterrestrials." Schneider wrote:

"Back in 1954, under the Eisenhower administration, the federal government decided to circumvent the Constitution of the United States and form a treaty with alien entities. It was called the 1954 Greed Treaty, which basically made the agreement that the aliens involved could take a few cows and test their implanting techniques on a few human beings, but that they had to give details about the people involved."

Like Cooper, Schneider also claimed that the aliens had violated the treaty. This involved the number of humans being abducted. Schneider added that "...the aliens altered the bargain until they decided they wouldn't abide by it at all."

Col. Phillip Corso is also among the "whistleblowers." Corso also wrote in his memoirs that the Eisenhower administration signed a treaty with the aliens. He stated: "We had negotiated a kind of surrender with them as long as we couldn't fight them. They dictated the terms because they knew what we feared most was disclosure." [16]

● The Whole Tooth

When an academic, holding a position at a major university, publicly claims that the President of the United States signed a secret treaty with extraterrestrials, he gets noticed. Peter Carlson, a staff writer with the *Washington Post* was among those who noticed Salla. His article, "Ike and the Alien

"We've had so many requests on that subject that we have a person who specializes in this. He specializes in transportation, and we decided to add UFOs to that. He does trains, planes, automobiles – and flying saucers."

Ambassadors The Whole Tooth About the President's Extraterrestrial Encounter," was published on February 19, 2004, in the "Style Section" of the newspaper.

In his January 28, 2004 paper, Salla had recounted the various accounts of the Eisenhower meeting with the aliens at Edwards, without reaching a conclusion about the chain of events. In a meeting with Carlson, however, he did provide a specific account. Salla told the reporter that Eisenhower's visit to Edwards had actually been to meet with two "Nordics," rather than to sign a treaty. Salla described these aliens as looking like Scandinavian humans, with white hair, pale blue eyes, and colorless lips. The Nordics communicated with Eisenhower telepathically. Salla explained, "It's as though you're hearing a person but they're not speaking."

According to Salla, the two blue-eyed aliens offered to share their advanced technology and spiritual wisdom, but only if the U.S. gave up its nuclear weapons. Salla explained, "They were afraid that we might blow up some of our nuclear technology, and apparently that does something to time and space and it impacts on extraterrestrial races on other planets."

Although several of the earlier accounts claimed the treaty was signed during Eisenhower's Edwards trip, Salla told Carlson a different version. Eisenhower refused the aliens' offer, as he did not want to give up nuclear weapons. According to Salla, sometime later in 1954, the U.S. government reached an agreement with the Grays. As with Cooper and the other whistleblower's accounts, this was an agreement which allowed the Grays to abduct humans, providing they were safely returned. Salla said that since then, the Grays have kidnapped "millions" of humans.

Salla also gave an insight as to how he became interested in exopolitics. Carlson wrote, "For much of the '90s, Salla studied conflict resolution and tried unsuccessfully to apply that knowledge to prevent war in East Timor and the Balkans, he says. Frustrated, he began looking for an extraterrestrial connection to human misery and, he says, he found evidence of ET visitations – including the Ike

encounter – on the Internet. 'There's a lot of stuff on the Internet,' he says, 'and I just went and pieced it together.'"

Carlson looked into the claims made by Salla. The lack of any records of Eisenhower having dental work in February 1954 was offered as evidence of a cover story for the trip to Edwards. Carlson contacted the Eisenhower Library, and was referred to an article by James M. Mixson published in the November 1995 issue of *The Bulletin of the History of Dentistry*. Mixson, who was both a dental historian and a professor at the Missouri-Kansas City School of Dentistry, drew on the U.S. surgeon general's records of Eisenhower's health which were opened in 1991.

The article, titled "A History of Dwight D. Eisenhower's Oral Health," noted that the president had considerable trouble with the porcelain cap on his upper left center incisor. It was first installed in July 1952, during the presidential campaign, but was chipped and repaired in December 1952. The cap was again chipped by the chicken wing on February 20, 1954. Dr. Francis A. Purcell, a local dentist, did the repair work. Mixson noted in the article that "The lack of a dental record from Purcell's office has helped fuel belief in this UFO encounter." The cap was chipped yet again in July 1954, when it was finally replaced with a "thin cast gold/platinum thimble crown."

Carlson also learned that his inquiry was not the first to the Eisenhower Library about the alleged incident. Jim Leyerzapf, an archivist at the library, told him "We've had so many requests on that subject that we have a person who specializes in this." Herb Pankratz was the archivist given the assignment. Leyerzapf explained, "He specializes in transportation, and we decided to add UFOs to that. He does trains, planes, automobiles – and flying saucers."

Pankratz told Carlson that the library had fielded dozens of inquiries about the Ike and the aliens story in the late 1980s and early 1990s. He also made a sage observation: "It's interesting how these stories have changed. Initially, the accounts claimed the President made a secret trip to Edwards Air Force Base to view the remains of aliens who crashed at Roswell, N.M., in 1947. Later stories claimed he had actually visited with

live aliens." [17]

Salla has maintained his belief in the reality of the Ike and the aliens story, and has referred to the alleged meeting in several subsequent papers. In one such paper, he speculated that the addition of the words "under God" in the U.S. Pledge of Allegiance were a result of the Edwards meeting. Salla "hypothesized" that President Eisenhower and his national security advisors were told "the truth of the human origins" at the meeting. He suggests that this:

"...so unnerved Eisenhower and his team, that they reacted in an entirely predicable way. They initiated a Congressional process to revise the Pledge of Allegiance to buttress their world view which was based in a traditional religious belief that humanity's origins were clearly associated with the divine intervention of a 'transcendental being' or 'God.' Introducing the revision of 'under God' into the Pledge would be a way of maintaining a human perspective which had now become a matter of U.S. national security given the knowledge the extraterrestrials claimed to possess about humanity's true origins. [18]

● Exopolitics as a Medieval Belief System

The story of Ike and the aliens began with a minor misunderstanding that resulted in an erroneous press report that President Eisenhower was dead. Gerald Light's letter then tied the incident into claims about a crashed saucer and a government cover up. This initial story was soon expanded. Desmond Leslie added an independent eyewitness report of the saucer being under guard at Edwards. The account written by Meade Layne provided a description of the saucer and its crew, as well as the back story of how the saucer came to Edwards. Wilbert B. Smith's memo completed the process, by supplying of official confirmation.

But the flaw in the tale of Ike and the aliens is that the story rests on the unsupported accounts of questionable individuals. Light and Layne were both occultists. Leslie was the co-author of "Professor" George Adamski's 1953 book, *Flying Saucers Have Landed*. Williamson was one of Adamski's followers, a witness to his November

20, 1952 contact with a man from Venus, and a contactee himself. Smith was not only a supporter of contactees such as Adamski, but also claimed in the mid-1950s to be in psychic contact with several space brothers. [19]

This flaw also exists in the story's revival as part of the exopolitics myth. Cooper, Wolf, Schneider, and Corso have all made claims about their backgrounds and experiences which are not supported by documentary evidence. Salla acknowledged this, but just as he rationalized Light being part of the group going to see the saucers, Salla also rationalized away the lack of evidence. He claimed that government policy dealing with the leaking information about UFOs "...is to intimidate, silence, eliminate or discredit these individuals." One such technique, Salla claimed, is "...removing all public records of former service men or corporate employees...." [20]

In medieval Europe, hearsay, myths, folklore, and legends were considered legal evidence. In witch trials, for example, a suspected witch would be thrown in a pond. If they floated, this was sufficient proof for them to be convicted by the court and executed as a witch. Such admissibility of hearsay evidence was eventually undone by the Enlightenment and the scientific revolution.

The exopolitics myth represents a return to this medieval belief system. The story of Ike and the aliens is based on the hearsay of the whistleblowers, unsupported by any evidence. Instead, like hearsay evidence and folklore in medieval times, they are to be accepted as true without question, even in the face of obvious contradictions and flaws. Exopolitics lacks any standards of evidence to judge which claims are valid and which are not. No screening of the whistleblowers is done. Rather, exopolitics writers pick and choose which of their claims are used and which are not, without any apparent logic or reason.

Just as Cooper was a major source for Salla's account of the Ike and the alien story, so too does he provide an example of this selectivity. There are no references to some of Cooper's other remarkable claims. He stated, for example, that there are "areas on the Moon where plant life grows and even changes color with the seasons," and that humans "can walk upon its surface without a space suit breathing from an oxygen bottle after undergoing decompression...." The most stunning of Cooper's claims is that the Cold War was a hoax, and that the U.S. and USSR were actually "the closest allies." [21]

What is as yet unknown is the influence that exopolitics will ultimately have on the flying saucer myth. Exopolitics may come to dominate UFO beliefs and shape the conspiratorial political ideas in the larger society.

Just as in medieval times flaws were dealt with by either saying they were deceptions by Satan or ignoring them, exopolitics writers deal with flaws in the whistleblowers' accounts in the same ways. This is shown by the differing versions of the Ike and the aliens stories told by each of the whistleblowers, how details such as location and dates changed in their accounts over time, and how Salla dealt with these flaws.

One example of this is John Lear's original version of the treaty story, as described in a December 29, 1987 paper. Lear said that the first contact came on April 30, 1964, when three saucers landed at Holloman AFB in New Mexico. A meeting was then held between the aliens and U.S. intelligence officers. Lear added that between 1969 and 1971, a treaty was reached between MJ-12 and the aliens. As in the other whistleblowers' accounts, Lear claimed the treaty was later violated by the aliens. [22]

Lear then gave a completely different version of the treaty story during a November 2, 2003 appearance on the radio show, "Coast to Coast." He now said that the meeting was in 1954 at "Muroc Test Center, which is now Edwards Airforce (sic) Base." He said that the aliens had "suggested that they could help us get rid of the Grays but Eisenhower turned down their offer because they offered no technology." Lear also said that the aliens had told Eisenhower that they had created humans. This caused the president to have the words "under God" added to the Pledge of Allegiance. [23]

Cooper's 1989 manifesto had claimed, "The aliens explained that they had created us through hybrid-ization...." However, Cooper said this occurred *after* Eisenhower met with the aliens at Edwards and the treaty was signed. [24] Further complicating matters, Cooper had also subsequently changed his story

of where the landing occurred, saying it was at Homestead AFB in Florida.

In his original January 28, 2004 paper on the Ike and the aliens story, Salla noted the differences between Cooper and Lear regarding when and where the meeting took place. Salla also claimed that Lear had worked as a CIA contract pilot, and had "a close relationship with CIA Director (DCI) William Colby..." Then Salla wrote:

"The question over which account is more reliable needs to focus on the possibility Lear had deliberately introduced some inaccuracies into his account. Lear's CIA association suggests he could have been a means of simultaneously confirming Cooper's information on the meetings while undermining Cooper's credibility by throwing in minor inconsistencies." [25]

During the time that Carlson was researching his story for the *Washington Post*, Salla was revising his paper; posting the new text a week before the Carlson article came out. In this new version of Research Study #8, Salla notes only that "There is some discrepancy in the testimonials as to which Air force base (sic) the spurned extraterrestrials met with President Eisenhower." He deleted the text about Lear and the CIA using false information to both support and discredit Cooper's accounts.

Salla added a new (second-hand) account of the Eisenhower meeting at Edwards to his paper. Charles L. Suggs, a retired Marine Sergeant, claimed that his late father, Navy Commander Charles L. Suggs, had accompanied President Eisenhower and others in his party to Edwards on February 20, 1954 to meet with two Nordic aliens. According to the younger Suggs, "The spokesman" stood a number of feet from Eisenhower and refused to let him come any closer. The second alien stood on the extended ramp of a "bi-convex saucer that stood on tripod landing gear." The aliens said that they came from another solar system, and, according to the younger Suggs' account, asked detailed questions regarding nuclear testing. Salla concluded that Lear's 2003 story and Suggs' account were more accurate versions. [26]

Exopolitics seems to be a new point of departure for the flying saucer myth. The original beliefs about UFOs developed at the beginning of the Cold War. Exopolitics, in contrast, is influenced by the much later anti-war movement, environmentalism, opposition to ballistic missile defences, the wide-spread acceptance of conspiracy theories, and the post-Cold War meeting of political extremes. Lear, Cooper, and Corso are

Rightists, but their claims are incorporated into a Leftist political framework.

Another influence on exopolitics is that of post modernism. Broadly speaking, this holds that every "narrative" or "text" is equally valid, and there is no one "real" version of history. The concept rejects any appeal to "truth" or "reality." An attempt to provide a complete account of events is considered "oppressive." All ideas are equally valid, and all accounts are equally true. This reflects the lack of any attempt to determine which of the different versions of the Ike and the aliens story is "real." The same also applies to post modernism itself, as despite being widely accepted, there is no specific meaning of the concept. This alone says much about post modernism.

A case can also be made that exopolitics is the inheritor of the contactee-occult tradition. Salla included Eduard "Billy" Meier and other contactees among the sources used in a long paper titled, "A Report on the Motivations and Activities of Extraterrestrial Races – A Typology of the Most Significant Extraterrestrial Races Interacting with Humanity." [27] Alfred Webre also makes references to claims by Billy Meier, specifically his "Talmud of Jmmanuel" and the "Henoah Prophecies." [28]

Use of occult methods is openly accepted in exopolitics. Salla considered remote viewing to be a moderate evidentiary support for exopolitical research. Alfred Webre was more explicit, stating that "Remote Viewing IS the scientific breakthrough that has made replicable Exopolitical research into the Universe possible." [29] Steven Greer said about remote viewing: "It's not a belief system. It is science; it is physics, pure and simple. Humans have abilities to access levels of consciousness generally only spoken about by mystics and shamans." [30]

What is as yet unknown is the influence that exopolitics will ultimately have on the flying saucer myth. Exopolitics may come to dominate UFO beliefs and shape the conspiratorial political ideas in the larger society. Alternately, exopolitics may prove to be nothing more than a short-lived fad. An earlier example was the idea that flying saucers were "psychic projections," rather than alien spaceships. This concept was popular in the 1970s, but vanished with the return of the crashed saucer stories and emergence of the Darkside. What does seem likely is that believers and skeptics alike have not yet heard the last of the Ike and the aliens story.

1. Peter Carlson, "Ike and the Alien Ambassadors The Whole Tooth About the President's Extraterrestrial Encounter" *The Washington Post* (February 19, 2004), p. C1.

2. Charles Berlitz, William L. Moore, *The Roswell Incident* (New York: Berkley Books, 1988), p. 131-133. James McIntyre was a Roman Catholic Cardinal in 1954.

3. *ibid.*, p. 135, 136. Hangars at Edwards AFB have either a three digit or a four digit designation. There was never a "Hangar 27" at the base, at any time. There was a "Building 27" at Edwards, but it was the old mess hall. All that remains of it today is the concrete slab.

4. *ibid.*, p. 69-75.

5. *ibid.*, p. 59-68, 100, 101, 103, 104, 120, 127, 128. Although Meade Layne's account was described in *The Roswell Incident* as "probably" written in 1949, several of its story elements were similar to those in Frank Scully's *Behind the Flying Saucers*, published in late 1950. These include the involvement of a business man, the alien bodies being burned, strange writing, and a broken porthole. This suggests a possibility that Layne's account was derived directly or indirectly from Scully. Additionally, Muroc AFB was renamed Edwards AFB on January 5, 1950.

6. *ibid.*, p. 125, 126, 135.

7. Paul Devereux, Peter Brooksmith, *UFOS AND UFOLOGY The First 50 Years* (London: Blandford Books, 1997), p. 110, 111, and "MJ12: Myth Or Reality?" *Just Cause* (December 1985), p. 1-3.

8. Milton William Cooper, "The Secret Government: The Origin, Identity, and Purpose of MJ-12," dated May 23, 1989.

9. Don Ecker, "Cooper Meets Violent End," *UFO Magazine* (February/March 2002), p. 69.

10. Dr. Michael E. Salla, "The History of Exopolitics: Evolving Political Approaches to UFOs & the Extraterrestrial Hypothesis," *Exopolitics Journal* 1:1 (October 2005), p. 2.

11. Dr. Steven Greer, "UFOs: What the Government Really Knows," The Disclosure Project web site, www.disclosureproject.org/bassiorinterview.htm. This is the text of an interview of Greer in *Hustler* magazine's November 2005 issue.

12. Greer, "When Disclosure Serves Secrecy" www.disclosureproject.org/disclosureserves.htm, 1999.

13. Greer, "Implications for the Environment, World Peace, World Poverty, and the Human Future," www.disclosureprojectrgxsummery/implications.htm, March 2001.

14. Alfred Webre, "The end of terrestrial politics?" November 1, 2000, http://exopolitics.blogs.com/exopolitics/2005/10/the_end_of_terr.html

15. Carlson, "Ike and the Alien Ambassadors," p. C1.

16. Salla, "'Eisenhower's 1954 Meeting With Extraterrestrials: The Fiftieth Anniversary of America's First Treaty With Extraterrestrials?" January 28, 2004. The author's copy of this

paper was printed out on February 8, 2004 at 4:01 p.m. Salla revised this paper and posted a new version, dated "Febuary (sic) 12, 2004," on his web site. Unless otherwise specified, the original January version is used.

17. Carlson, "Ike and the Alien Ambassadors," p. C1.

18. Salla, "What Did President Eisenhower Secretly Know that led to him supporting a Revision of the Pledge of Allegiance," www.exopolitics.org/Exo-Comment-17.htm, June 15, 2004.

19. Paul Kimball, "Canada and Flying Saucers, Vol. VI [Wilbert Smith - Competent? Credible? - Part 2]" www.redstarfilms.blogspot.com/2005_10_01_redstarfilms_archive.html.

20. Salla, "'Eisenhower's 1954 Meeting With Extraterrestrials."

21. Cooper, "The Secret Government: The Origin, Identity, and Purpose of MJ-12."

22. John Lear, "Statement Released By: John Lear, December 29, 1987," p. 2, 3.

23. "John Lear Disclosure Briefing," *Coast to Coast Radio* (November 2003) www.coasttocoastam.com/shows/2003/11/02.html. Salla was apparently not aware of Lear's 1987 claims regarding a 1964 meeting at Holloman AFB, or that Cooper had written in 1989 that the meeting was at Edwards.

24. Cooper, "The Secret Government: The Origin, Identity, and Purpose of MJ-12."

25. Salla, "'Eisenhower's 1954 Meeting With Extraterrestrials."

26. Salla, "'Eisenhower's 1954 Meeting With Extraterrestrials." February 12, 2004 version, www.exopolitics.org/Study-Paper-8-PF.htm. Lear's 2003 account was apparently also the source for Salla's later paper which claimed that "under God" was added to the Pledge of Allegiance as a result of the meeting. The younger Suggs' description of the white-haired, blue eyed aliens with colorless lips was used by Salla in his conversation with Carlson.

27. Salla, "A Report on the Motivations and Activities of Extraterrestrial Races – A Typology of the Most Significant Extraterrestrial Races Interacting with Humanity," www.exopolitics.org/Report-ET-Motivations-PF.htm, January 1, 2005.

28. Weber, "The Talmud of Jmmanuel and Jesus Christ as Possible UFO Contactee," http://exopolitics.blogs.com/exopolitics/2005/11/coopradiorg_pr.html, and "Socio-political implications of the Talmud of Jmmanuel and the Henoah Prophecies, in the context of the life work of 'Billy' Eduard Albert Meier," http://exopolitics.blogs.com/exopolitics/2005/11/sociopolitical_.html.

29. Webre, "A Vital Debate: 'Remote Viewing as a research tool in Exopolitics,'" http://exopolitics.blogs.com/exopolitics/2005/10/remote_viewing_.html (Capitalizations in original text.)

30. Harold E. Burt, "UFO Hopefuls Get CSETI's Spin on Remote Viewing," *UFO Magazine* (December 1998), p. 7.

INVIZIKIDS

Mike Hallowell

CHILDHOOD is the Roman Coliseum of imagination, the Grand Old Opry of fantasy. When we are children we mentally create that which we cannot appropriate in the flesh, and, further, imbue it with a life that adult fantasies can never achieve.

Ask any psychologist; that's why children create what are usually referred to as "imaginary friends", right? Well, maybe in some cases.

But not all. No sirree. I had two "imaginary" childhood friends when I was a toddler. One was called Maureen, the other Elizabeth. To this day I am convinced that they were more - far more - than fantasies.

Ask anyone who has ever heard of the phenomenon what precipitates it and you will likely receive one of two stock answers. Most psychologists argue that youngsters create imaginary friends when they are short of siblings to interact with. If you ain't got a brother, make one. Short of a sister? Build one in your head.

Of course, this may well hold true in some cases, but my research has shown me that the majority of "imaginary" friends actually belong to children who already have siblings, and it is at this juncture that the second explanation usually raises its head.

"Ah", say the psycho-sages, "When there are brothers and sisters at home taking all the attention then kids will invent an imaginary playmate that they can 'keep to themselves' and don't have to share."

So they you have it. Kids with allegedly imaginary friends invent them either because they have no siblings or because they do have them. This is an argument which, I would pretty much sews up all the possibilities, but it is flawed. Why? For it is built upon the premise that "imaginary" childhood friends really are imaginary and arrogantly ignores many other explanations.

I have interviewed nearly one hundred people from numerous continents and countries, all of whom had (or have) allegedly imaginary friends. What struck me, first of all, was a number of constants which always seem to present themselves.

For instance, these "non-corporeal companions" or NCCs as I prefer to call

Most people could not see her.
She was invisible like a ghost.
But Morgan could see her.
Clearly. To Morgan, Meredith was
very real.
You see, Meredith was Morgan's
imaginary friend.



four

them, almost always fit neatly into one of four clearly-defined categories. More of that later,

Another bizarre feature is the way that many NCCs seem to possess names which we may call "double-barrelled repetitives". A woman from the Philippines used to have an NCC called "Gardu-Gardu". A youngster from South Yorkshire said his NCC was called Bally-Bally. A Bangladeshi youth I interviewed called his NCC Manno-Manno.

In June 2006 I gave a lecture at a conference in St. Annes on Sea. An American chap in the audience raised his hand in astonishment and told me that his NCC had been called Likki-Likki. This double-barrelled repetitive was a universal constant during my research; not present in every case, but present enough times to make its significance obvious.

There are other constants connected to nomenclature. Many NCCs, for example, have names which are curiously dislocated from their own culture or gender. I encountered a Native American tribal chief called Brian, a boxer called Doris, a teenager known as Spider and a New York policeman called Mr. Marbles. Eventually I concluded that the bizarre naming system attendant to NCCs is so distinct that it almost certainly forms part of their "culture".

I discovered other constants. NCCs never hurt their corporeal friends, but will sometimes frighten them. They often dish out "advice" or "counsel" to experients, and their appearances seem to be dictated by a fixed set of rules.

NCCs only seem to appear to experients between the age of 3 and the onset of puberty. They never appear to more than one experient (although it is just possible they may appear to other experients at different times who do not know each other) and they are always very vague about their origins when questioned.

These constants become even more apparent when we look at the aforementioned categories of NCC that I have been able to identify.

● Type 1: The Invizikids

Invisible (to everyone but the experient) "imaginary" children comprise the most common order of NCC. They look and act like perfectly normal children and, about 70% of the time, have common names which are perfectly at home within the cultural setting of the experient. 30% of the time they will have a name which is a double-barrelled repetitive.



Kids with allegedly imaginary friends invent them either because they have no siblings or because they do have them. This is an argument which, I would venture, pretty much sews up all the possibilities!

Invizikids will play games and engage in other activities with experients. They will also eat, drink, cough, sneeze and burp. In fact, the only things that distinguish them from corporeal youngsters are a) that they are invisible to everyone else, and b) that they can appear and disappear at will.

When Invizikids do their disappearing act it will normally take one of two forms. Some Type-1 NCCs will remain visible to the experient when another person enters the room. Whilst they are present the experient may see them whilst others cannot. This implies that their ability to become invisible is selective. Others will always become invisible to the experient too, suggesting that whilst some NCCs can choose who they become invisible to at any given time, others only have the ability to be either invisible or invisible to everyone at once.

Whenever experients question their Type-1 NCC about their origins, such as asking them where they live, or where they come from, the NCC will

always be vague. Typically they'll answer, "From far away", or "From another place". Curiously they may also claim to live on a vehicle which is always on the move, which also makes it difficult to ascertain where they hail from. One youngster told me that his Type-1 NCC "lived on a big red bus".

● Type-2: The Elementals

Type-2 NCCs almost always live out-of-doors, often by the coast and in remote areas where, presumably, they are unlikely to be seen. They will often be described as "little goblins", "pixies" or such like. Unlike Type-1 NCCs, who are always conventionally-sized, Type-2 NCCs are typically between 30 – 50cm in height.

Type-2 NCCs tend to be named with either a double-barrelled repetitive or a bizarre title. Mol-Mol, Koddy-Koddy, Ball Eagle and Wumpy are examples I've come across.

Type-2 NCCs generally appear distant or remote to their corporeal friends. They are not unfriendly, but they don't make conversation as readily and tend not to smile very much.

Like Type-1 NCCs, Type-2s can appear and disappear at will. However, they tend to do this less often. This may be because they inhabit remote areas where, when they are interacting with an experient, they are far less likely to be interrupted by a third party.

A unique feature of Type-2 NCCs is that they may appear in multiple numbers to experients.

● Type-3: The Animals

Type-3 NCCs look like conventional animals and are proportionately-sized. Like Type-1 NCCs they appear "normal". If you could see a Type-3 rat, dog or cat, for instance, you may never know that it was an NCC unless it suddenly disappeared in front of you. Like Type-1 NCCs they can also appear and disappear at will.

Type-3 NCCs have a unique feature; they can almost always talk in the language of the experient and are quite happy to engage them in conversation. Intriguingly, although Type-3s only ever appear to the primary experient, they are often heard by others in the vicinity. This is interesting, for it suggests that NCCs may not be a subjective experience created in the mind of the experient, but may well have an objective reality.

● Type-4: The Wackies

Wackies comprise the most bizarre of the four NCC orders, and also the least well-known. Like other types they will appear and disappear at will, but it is their appearance that distinguishes

them markedly.

Wackies come in two distinct types; Sages and Animates. Sages are human-like but typically dress in an exotic manner and tend to display distinct cultural characteristics. Almost always this will be a culture different to that of the experient. They may appear as a Native American warrior, a Buddha-like sage or a Chinese mandarin, etc. Sages may also only show themselves from the waist up (one youngster told me that his "Eskimo" NCC would appear from the waist up at floor level, looking as if his legs were buried in the ground.) Sage-like Wackies always appear as adults, never children. Typically they will dispense pearls of wisdom to their young experients, often urging them never to steal, get angry or hurt others.

Animates share many of the characteristics of Sages, but their appearance is radically different. Curiously, Animates will appear as every-day household objects that suddenly grow arms and legs (but rarely heads). During my research I have come across yoghurt cartons, banana skins, wall-mounted radiators and candle-holders which have suddenly taken on a life of their own and spoken to their presumably startled witnesses.

Like other orders of NCC, Type-4s will either have human names such as Walter, Ethel or Cindy, or, again, double-barrelled repetitives like Mook-Mook, Kobby-Kobby or Fudda-Fudda. It is this common denominator which urges me to include animates within the family tree of Non-Corporeal Companions.

One characteristic typical of Type-4 Animates is that they usually only appear when the experient is at a low ebb psychologically. When the child witness is unhappy, worried or depressed a nearby object will burst into life, grow arms and legs and offer words of comfort.

Animates have a curious habit of leaving behind essentially useless "gifts" for experients, such as a pile of biscuit crumbs on the carpet, a small ball of coloured fluff or a dried leaf.

● Curiosities of the NCC Phenomenon

When I was a child I had two Type-1 NCCs. They never appeared together except when we moved house. Just before we vacated the premises for the last time they both appeared simultaneously to bid me farewell. However, they never interacted with each other and seemed completely unaware of each other's presence. I remember them actually talking over the top of each other. I



They say that "an only child is a lonely child". Maybe, just maybe, there aren't so many lonely children around as we've hitherto imagined.

never saw them again.

NCCs are distinctly place-centred. If you relocate they will stay behind. However, even this characteristic needs some investigation. A Philippina [sic] woman told me that her young cousin had a Type-1 NCC that always appeared to her in a particular grove of mango trees. The cousin eventually relocated to another city, and, one day, went for a walk to familiarise herself with her new environment. Eventually she stumbled upon a mango grove very similar to the one back home where she had encountered her NCC. To her astonishment her NCC appeared and started to talk to her. This begs the question; are NCCs tied to a particular geographical location or, as it seems in this case, a particular type of location?

As a child I used to insist that my mother set a place at the table for either Maureen or Elizabeth. I can recall seeing them eat their food with gusto, but

my mother's recollection is different. She remembers taking out the untouched plate of food into the kitchen.

I sometimes wonder if I was experiencing two different realities simultaneously. In Reality A Maureen/Elizabeth was present and ate her food. In Reality B she was absent and the food set out for her was wasted. I can't be sure, but it's a thought.

Sometimes NCCs let their guard slip and their presence becomes obvious to others. I remember on one occasion passing a ball back and forth across the lounge floor with Elizabeth. Suddenly my grandmother entered the room just in time to see the ball roll away from me, come to an abrupt halt and then roll back to where I was sitting. She could not see Elizabeth, but her face was a picture.

● Explanations

To be honest I do not know where NCCs come from and I have no fixed ideas as yet regarding their nature. I simply know they exist. They may be the spirits of the dead or creatures from another dimension. Perhaps they are something else entirely.

I have never found anything remotely sinister about this baffling phenomenon, although the refusal of NCCs to disclose anything about their origins could be viewed as a little disturbing. We may never get to the bottom of the mystery, but for me it doesn't matter. I simply accept NCCs on their own terms and believe they may even play a vital part in our development into adulthood.

What fascinates me more than anything else is that, despite the universal prevalence of the NCC phenomenon, it has attracted very little attention. Studies available on the Internet are almost all governed by the "psychological" approach, that NCCs are the product of the mind of a lonely child.

People are normally disturbed by the idea that their house may be haunted, and yet they accept without the slightest reticence the notion that their child may be talking to an invisible entity. Is this because they don't believe that their child's "imaginary" friend really exists, or because they sense that the phenomenon, whatever its nature, is essentially harmless?

They say that "an only child is a lonely child". Maybe, just maybe, there aren't so many lonely children around as we've hitherto imagined.

Mike Hallowell is currently writing a book about the "imaginary friend" phenomenon and would be interested to hear readers' own experiences. He can be contacted at bizarrefans@tiscali.co.uk.

A careworn young woman, going about her business, meets a stranger; an elderly man with a grey beard, wearing a grey coat and the clothes of the past generation. He carries a white wand in his hand. He asks her why she is so sad. She explains that her husband, baby and cow are all sick. Her husband will recover he says, but the other two will die.

This comes true and she meets him again and again. He is a soldier who died in the wars of a generation ago. He takes her to meet the fairy folk, who disappear into a lake, and gives her medicine and power of healing. He gives her messages to give to his son, tells her that the Old Catholic faith is better than the new reformed one, yet on other occasions tells her to abandon Christianity. He becomes her familiar. She is living in seventeenth century Scotland and so gets burnt at the stake for witchcraft.

This is the kind of story which appears time and again in witchcraft trial evidence - encounters with boggarts, which have some of the properties of fairies, some of ghosts and some of demons. These stories have usually been interpreted as having filtered down from elite culture and its demonological obsessions, as being produced by the courts and agreed upon by terrified defendants. Or else obtained by torture or seeming torture. Emma Wilby (1) argues that these are in fact accounts of actual visionary experiences, and that many of the accused in witchcraft cases were the cunning folk, the local healers and magicians, the people you went to her herbal cures, love potions, to find lost goods or detect criminals. They could use their skills for good or ill and were often morally ambiguous.

For those with some background in anthropology, this sounds familiar, for this is part of the global shamanic tradition. The shaman is powerful but often ambiguous figure, healer and destroyer. The shaman may use all sorts of slight of hand and other tricks to make his/her performance more dramatic. Emma Wilby goes further and argues that the shaman was part of an authentic mystical tradition, and as shamans so were the cunning folk. This is hard for us to grasp because Christianity equates spirituality with moral uprightness, and today with a variety of socially approved attitudes, we find it difficult to understand that the same person could be both a charlatan and a religious visionary. Yet Emma Wilby suggests the experiences of the witch/cunning person with their famil-



Cunning Folk & familiar spirits



Peter
Logerson

ars have parallels in the language, especially the sexual language, which mystics may employ about Jesus. We should also remember that one such cunning person and treasure finder Joseph Smith, went on to found one of the fastest growing world religions.

The familiars are seen here as shamanic spirit guides, envisioned often in the form of animals, reminders that these stories come from a time in which people had a vastly more intimate relationship with animals than we have today.

People lived in a world where poverty, hunger, backbreaking physical labour, the absence of artificial lighting, and a pre-literate story telling culture, combined with a total belief in spirits (and even possibly both the incidental or deliberate ingestion of mind altering substances), combined to make visionary experiences all the more profound, especially from that four percent or so of the population of have fantasy prone personalities.

This thesis is not quite as new as it may appear, for it is a restatement, in academic terms of the popular spiritualist belief that the witches were the psychics and mediums of the past, unjustly persecuted. One can certainly see that there is continuity between the shamans' spirit guide, the familiar, and the modern day spirit guides of the mediums. Modern mediums do not of course normally converse with tail wagging dogs and suckling ferrets (though remember Gef the Manx talking mongoose) having now got better company in the form of racially stereotyped pantomime foreigners etc.

Looking at the stories presented here, *Magonia* readers will detect similarities to modern visionary experiences. Think of Cynthia Appleton and her Venusian familiar for example, and there are other stories, not all of them published in which similar themes occur. Perhaps Emma Wilby would have gained some considerable insights from a study of modern anomalous personal experiences.

How secure is this thesis? I must confess to my doubts, No doubt *some* of the those accused of witchcraft were local cunning folk, healers, bewitchers and the like, but by no means all. Many more were probably just the wrong person at the wrong time. As I read through this book, I noticed that Emma Wilby uses terms such 'cunning person' quite indiscriminately, solely on the basis that they confessed to either meeting with supernaturals of one kind or another, or having familiars, and not that they had an actual local reputation



as such. Take one example, Jane Weir of Edinburgh. Wilby calls her a 'cunning woman', in fact Jane was the victim of years of sexual abuse by her puritan brother Thomas, a pillar of the local Kirk. In his old age he confessed to multiple sexual crimes and misdemeanours, and was accused of being a witch, because, well, only witches committed incest with their sisters and had sex with cattle. Only after Thomas's arrest did Jane confess to all sorts of fantastic crimes and witchcrafts.

Today we can understand how someone who had been first raped as a child by her teenage brother, and abused for years afterwards might come to blame herself. Perhaps Thomas accused her of bewitching him. Perhaps now she had some kind of power. On the gallows, she cried "let my shame be total" and tried to rip off her clothes, the despairing act of a self-blaming victim of sexual abuse, and not the defiant act of some sort of mystic as imagined by Wilby. Here is the danger in Wilby's case, by arguing that the accused were a special sort of person, she comes close to blaming the victims.

What does the ferret, toad, dog cat familiar remind you of? They are household pets or the little wild creatures around the house. What do the consoling familiars sound like? Children's imaginary friends. These images are of the imaginary friends and real and fantasy creatures to which children talk, share their hopes, fears and deepest secrets. These familiars then might be thought of as adult imaginary companions, to whom women in particular might reveal their innermost feelings. They provide fantasy consolations and imaginary advice. Even today there may be many adults who have such imaginary companions, though they will not be given supernatural attributes.

To understand the confessions, we have to realise that belief in witchcraft and witches was near universal. Just as today people dream of what it would be like to be a film star, a footballer, a

Will we see phantom emails, mobile calls from the dead, messages from imaginary satellite channels, fairy computers and daemonic i-pods?

model, or have the odd dream of robbing a bank or other antisocial activity, people must have fantasised about what it would be like to be a witch ("If only I was a witch I could be rich, I would show that stuck up Mrs Figgis a thing or two, Farmer Giles wouldn't deny me alms again, sex with the devil might actually be fun, etc.) Then as now people could have dark and forbidden fantasies, and toy with the glamour of the dark side. There was the same allure of the forbidden. There would have been the temptation to just try one of those forbidden spells which a friend had told you in a shocked whisper behind the pig pen. However, daydreamers then had a fear that by and large they don't have today: that by entertaining such fantasies, Satan had already got his claws into you, that you really were a witch. When Mrs Figgis's youngest sickened and Farmer Giles' barn burnt down, could you be really, really sure that you hadn't caused it? The accused may well come to believe that they deserved the accusation, that their daydreams meant they were indeed witches. Others could escape accusations by becoming accusers.

Equally in a world drenched in the supernatural, dreams, fantasies and visionary experiences derived from the petty supernaturals of popular culture might have been quite common. It's clear that people had no fixed idea of what these petty supernaturals were; sometimes they were fairies, sometimes ghosts, sometimes angels and sometimes devils. Though Emma Wilby

tends to see these as pagan survivals, it strikes me as implausible that a population whose knowledge of Christianity was still rather hazy after nearly a millennium, could have preserved any folk traditions over that period. More likely is that people constructed such creatures from a variety of sources both popular and theological. They tended to represent the inconstant and amoral forces of wild nature, on which people were wholly dependent.

I would have to summarise this book as having both important insights and important flaws. Like many theorists, Wilby aims at too neat a solution. Some, but by no means the majority, of the accused may have been cunning folk; however they may have still played an important role in that their visionary experiences may not have simply contributed to their own narratives, but by feeding into the popular culture have influenced the visions and beliefs of the wider community.

I am struck by Emma Wilby's perception of how intimate animals were to our ancestors' lives, how they interacted with them, and how their visions and beliefs and imaginary companions were shaped by them. Victorian spiritualists' imaginary companions were inspired by the figures from the music hall and children's tales of exotic cultures, those of the second half of the twentieth century from science fiction. Perhaps for many people today their most intimate companions are mobile phones, computers, and televisions. How will they feature as spirit guides and secret consolers? Will we see phantom emails, text messages from the dead, messages from imaginary satellite channels, fairy computers and daemonic i-pods, angelic Internet sites, and on-line demonic pacts - www.sell yoursoul.com?

(1) Emma Wilby. *Cunning Folk and Familiar Spirits: shamanistic traditions in early modern British witchcraft and magic*. Sussex Academic Press, 2005. £15.95



IN MAGONIA 92, Peter Rogerson reviews Merrily Harpur's *Mystery Big Cats*, and says:

"What could be more symbolic of the ordinary, secular, profane, and artificial than a black plastic bag? But this bag, like a deserted old house, is going to the wild. Perhaps in that setting there is dropping of the of the guard and a momentary apprehension of what a truly awesome terrible and wholly other thing a black plastic bag really is, an experience which evokes "massive shock and awe". Such an emotion is quite inconsistent with our idea of a black plastic bag, and indeed if plastic bags routinely evoked feelings of shock and awe we could never deal with them on a day to day basis, therefore the image is replaced by something much more appropriate to the feelings evoked."

This powerfully evokes memory of an experience of my own, which I know you will deeply ponder for minutes. In order to understand my description, please refer to the attached blow-up from a map of bus routes in Chicago.

In the wee hours of a March morning in 1994, I ate at an all-night restaurant at the intersection of Western and Montrose Avenues. At about 4:30 a.m. I left, to walk east four blocks to Lincoln Avenue, where I would turn south to get to an all-night supermarket. My reason for thusly shopping was threefold: a) I've always been rather nocturnal, b) it's really a safe area, especially on a very cold, windy night, and I'm nuts. I was on the south side of the street, and across the street is a biggish park (Welles Park) with a lot of space open for winds.

As I was crossing the side-street bordering the last of the four blocks, I looked ahead and saw something at first delightful. I must here describe this last, short block before Lincoln Avenue: on one half of the block are two or three-storey buildings, set back behind small lawns. A grassy strip with regularly-spaced trees borders the curb. An alley cuts the block in half. The second half-block is a single, cliff-like eight-storey apartment building (shops and restaurants at ground level). There was nothing but concrete and a couple of light-poles from building to curb. Some of this half-block length is a bus stop; for some reason, there were no cars parked in the two legal parking spaces near the alley. This clean sweep was part of the micro-meteorology that produced a very neat little whirlwind taking up over half the width of the sidewalk.

I could see this "debris-devil" because it swirled, counterclockwise, a load of trash just above the sidewalk: urban grit,

last year's leaves, scraps of paper, a few small bags, and one long length--maybe six or eight feet--of what looked like black tissue paper (but I suppose it was ultrathin plastic). The debris-devil was slowly coming towards me, and I remember wondering what it would feel like to walk through it, if it lasted.

At that moment a cat walked out of the alley.

Even in the sodium-light of our streetlights, I could tell it was an orange-and-white-striped tabby. It walked a few feet, stopped, and casually looked at the advancing debris-devil as you or I might look at an odd truck. But as the whirlwind neared the alley's mouth, microconditions changed. It sped up, and tightened, like a whirling skater drawing in her arms. That stretched-out swath of black tissue-plastic was drawn together. One end curled around itself. The other end was caught in the ascending vortex, and (very like a cobra rearing on a turn-table) began rising up, higher, higher.

That cat went absolutely rigid. I could hear it thinking: "Oh.My God!"

Instantly head and tail changed places, and the cat bounded into the alley.

As it came to the alley, the whirlwind collapsed, and its debris (tissue-plastic and all) slid into the gutter. When I passed the alley, I looked into it. A few hundred feet down was the cat, looking back over its shoulder at me.

I am always polite to cats (they are Royalty), so I thought but did not say: "You shoulda called Ghost Busters!"

If I'm asked, I say that I've never had a Close Encounter, but I have observed someone else having one.

Mr. Rogerson may existentialize the incident ("wholly other"?). He may psychologize it (innate cobra template?), or psychosocialize it (too man' TV wildlife programs?). He may Meadenize it (electrifying, if not electrified?) He may de-scientize it (since the city put up a handsome inadequate shelter at the bus stop, will the micro-meteorology ever repeat?). But damn it! there was something technological involved--way beyond the technology of the witness's species--even if any question of "intent" is ... rather theological.

P.S. I suppose I gotta clarify. If you occupy my Standpunkt, you have a mildly amusing anecdote.

If you occupy the cat's Standpunkt, you are in a desperate muddle as soon as you are tossed any of a variety of challenges. Such thoughts may give paws to the critic.



Philip Mantle and Paul Stonehill. *Mysterious sky: Soviet UFO Phenomenon.* Publish America, 2006 £15.50.

Both in its own eyes, and in the eyes of many of its enemies, the former Soviet Union projected the image of being an atheist state dedicated to the principles of dialectical materialism. The reality was quite different, for underneath the surface all sorts of mystical and occult beliefs, many dating back from before the Revolution, flourished. From time to time these would surface and appear in various official and quasi-official publications. In a sense the totalitarian nature of the regime aided the dissemination of such material, for the normal processes of peer review and debate did not operate. The first consideration that would be critics had to bear in mind was not whether an outlandish claim was valid or not, but mindful of the Lysenko affair, was whether or not the claimant had the backing of some powerful patron it would be unwise to antagonise.

Thus the former Soviet Union saw the publication of many paranormal-type claims, which would flourish for a while, usually until the senior leadership decided otherwise. Once the processes of democratisation got under way, this sort of material exploded. As the ruling ideology collapsed people looked for new sets of beliefs to make sense of their lives. Many have turned back to the Orthodox Church, but others have turned to this

underground of occult beliefs. These can now be freely published, but society still lacks the tradition of independent critical thought and public debate.

This is the climate from which this often fascinating collection of ufological and semi-ufological folklore has emerged. This Russian ufology seems to have some things in common with western ufology, but in other ways it has its own spin. UFO stories merge with older occult traditions, beliefs in mysterious locations, bottomless lakes, occult revelations, strange forces and the like. The Tunguska meteorite and various ancient astronaut/secret civilisation type speculations also feature heavily, as do various cosmonaut-based ghost and UFO stories. There appears to be little in the way of 'scientific ufology' in the fashion of the old NICAP to structure the belief system. The line between 'serious' ufology and the sort of material which appears in the *Weekly World News* is very blurred, if present at all.

'Serious' and 'scientific' ufologists reading this book are likely to be disappointed, for almost nothing in the way of actual evidence is presented, and to be honest the chances of much of this material turning out to be more or less accurate reportage of actual historical events is likely to be pretty slim. Indeed purists might actually argue that we cannot be sure of how much is actual 'real' folklore - i.e. stories and rumours which are actually circulating in society - and how much is just made up by the vari-

ous writers whose views are presented here. Some of this folklore looks as though it was concocted to cover for various military activities.

Whatever its origins however this material is now 'out there' in magazine articles, the internet and books, and serves the same function of much traditional folklore in symbolising the inescapable otherness of wild nature.

Garrett G Fagan (editor). *Archaeological Fantasies.* Routledge, 2006, £25.

This collection of papers explores and deplores the growth of fantastic archaeology, much of it associated with the writings of Graham Hancock and his co-writers. Authors examine the nature of archaeological pseudoscience, which to no great surprise much resembles various other kinds of pseudoscience, and present specific examples of the 'fantastic archaeology' of the Maya and the Egyptians.

Much of the Hancockian and related speculation might appear to be harmless romanticism, after all, you might think, does it matter much to our everyday lives if people believe that the pyramids were built 10,000 years ago by a lost civilisation? However, several of the contributors point out, the real damage caused by archaeological pseudoscience comes when it is used for a variety of nationalistic and racist causes. The prime examples shown here are its use by the Nazis, and by the semi-fascist Indian People's Party (BJP), both committed to the idea of one volk, one nation, and one blood. The BJP's pseudoarchaeology was just a part of a larger plan to Indianise science, a plan which included the teaching of astrology and 'Vedic Science' in the universities. A milder form exists in the west with the cult of the Celts (now



being presented as the inhabitants of a peaceful European confederation of independent city states and equal opportunities free traders, all that asty stuff about head-hunting and cattle raiding being nothing but Roman propaganda).

Some might argue that the sharp divide between 'real' and 'pseudo' archaeology is a little too sharply drawn here, and that the pseudo stuff is simply an extreme example of what happens when people go beyond an analysis of the actual physical data of archaeology into speculation about 'what it all means' and the beliefs and practices of past people. Once the artefacts start being woven into narratives, there is a great danger that these narratives will tell us as much, if not more, about the narrator's own time than about the past which is being described. There is always a tendency to see the past world not in terms of people more or less like ourselves, but in terms of either 'primitive savagery' or a lost golden age of 'ancient wisdom'.

Martyn Jolly. *Faces of the Living Dead: the belief in spirit photography*. British Library, 2006. £20.00.

Until very recently, the spirit photographs shown here would have been regarded by all except the most credulous as nothing but an obvious and cynical fraud, battenning on the bereaved. Now, it appears, historians of photography are increasingly viewing them as works of art, and as social documents. Photography historian Martyn Jolly argues that they in some sense sum up the power of all photography, the power to still time and summon up the dead. All the faces in these photographs, all of which are now 80 or more years old are faces of the dead.

There are two major kinds of spirit photograph displayed here, one are the extras which appeared on developed photographs, the majority produced by what looks to the modern eye as obvious double exposures; the others are photographs of the various materialisations and ectoplasms which manifested in séance rooms. The former clearly show some standard artistic motifs, faces surrounded by cloudy haze for example, no doubt to emphasise their other worldly origin and ethereal nature. In contrast the photographs of ectoplasm highlight its fleshy nature.

Ectoplasm varied to meet the background of investigators, medical men encountered fleshily organic, indeed orgasmic, ectoplasm; an engineer like W. J. Crawford encountered ec-

toplasm which acted like rods and other mechanical devices. The materialisations seem to come from some in-between zone, representing liminal regions between matter and spirit and nature and artefact. These do not respect any conventional idea of beauty, often more than verging on the grotesque.

These pictures can be seen as both 'cruel hoaxes' and as artefacts whereby interior visions were made manifest in public space. If this were done by painting or drama, there would be little demurring, but the use of photography challenges our ethical sense because photography is (or was) meant to be a 'documentary record' of events already out there in the public space of 'hard facts'. These pictures subvert this documentary image, and often pioneered techniques which would later be used in film and other special effects

Seeing these pictures one wonders how long it will be before UFO photographs receive attention as works of art. George Adamski's flying saucer photographs are clearly iconic images which have had a major impact on popular culture. Like the spirit photographs, they are hidden works of art which are never meant to be submitted to galleries, but rather to provide visual accompaniment to a powerful folklore. They can be seen therefore as modern forms of folk art in much the same way that crop circles can.

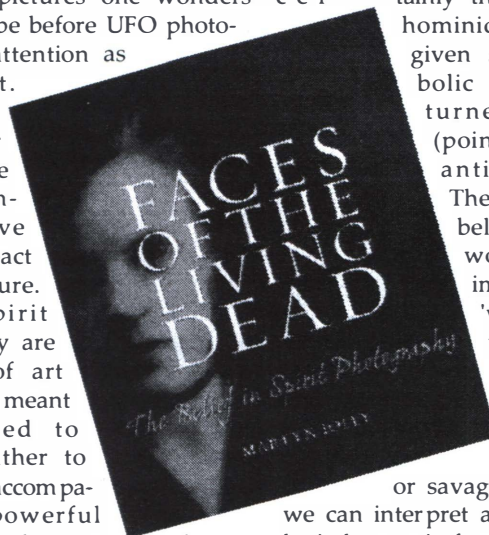
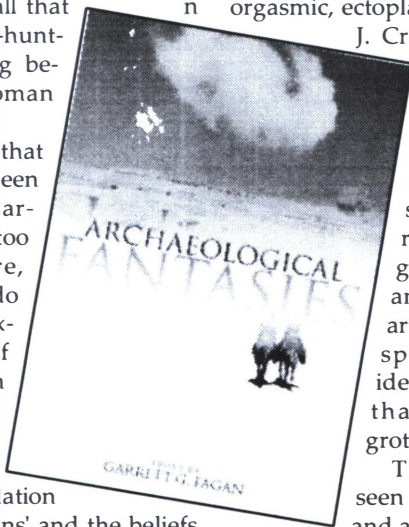
Perhaps an even more subversive thought is whether those spirit or UFO photographs which are not the product of conscious artifice, such as pictures showing natural reflections, artefacts of the development processes, unusual lighting conditions or "ordinary" objects seen at strange angles can also be regarded as art. Art created not by an external artist but by the imagination of the beholder.

Michael Newton. *Encyclopedia of Cryptozoology: a global guide to hidden animals and their pursuers*. MacFarland, 2005. £67.95.

This massive survey of alleged cryptids and cryptozoologists is orientated very much towards a paws and pelts approach, but the great majority of the entries, which relate to Lake Monsters, hairy hominids and alien big cats more or less proves the absurdity of that approach. For they demonstrate the sheer numbers involved, and the differences between the wide variety of genuinely newly discovered animals - none of which seem to have ever featured in any cryptozoologist's wants list - and the things which obsesses the hunters. Read this and you will get the impression that there is scarcely a body of water above the level of a street puddle which does not have its own 'monster' (one is indeed reported from a flooded field), that alien big cats are competing with the grey squirrels to take over the British countryside and near every state in the US, and a good many other places beside have their own resident bigfoot.

It becomes obvious that many of the entries relate to barely euhemised petty supernaturals who have the trickster quality of bogbarts world wide. This is certainly the case of the hairy hominids, which may be given such obvious symbolic properties as feet turned backwards (pointing to their wild anti-cultural status). These creatures clearly belong to the goblin world of the human imagination, they are 'wild things of the wilderness' which may be envisioned by different cultures either as supernatural forces or savage beasts, and which we can interpret as being symbolic of the 'otherness' of wild nature.

Cryptozoologists have tended to see such creatures as 'prehistoric survivals', without perhaps being consciously aware of the religious origins of such ideas. They date from the pre-Darwinian period when fossil animals were beginning to be recognised as such. The discovery of so many creatures which were clearly not around anymore posed a dilemma for the religiously minded: how could so many of the Creator's products have been allowed to go to waste? So the idea arose that they were



not really gone, but were secreted away in some remote part of the earth. It is therefore not surprising that a number of cryptozoologists are inspired by creationist world views. Today, another motivation is a kind of guilt over the destruction of habitats and species, and the hope that nothing is irredeemably lost; at a deep level too there is something of the idea of 'survival of death by proxy': if dinosaurs are not truly dead, then maybe I will never be truly dead either.

Of course the 'prehistoric survivals' and 'ape men' tend to resemble folk images of what such creatures should look like, rather than the latest thinking, and perhaps comic books and old school textbooks are one of the primary sources of the images. Some cryptozoologists clearly live in a fantasy world full of naive 'natives' cut off from the rest of the world, who have never seen a school book in their life. There is quite a bit of an undercurrent of this rather racist thinking in the literature. Sometimes this can be quite unpleasant as when Russian cryptozoologists claimed someone was the decedent of the almas (wild men thought of as Neanderthal survivors) because of his 'Negroid' features.

We are always afraid of the wilderness, I can remember my childhood fears of the wolves in the woods behind Colwyn Bay where we went for summer holidays, or the patch of woodland near my Uncle's home in St Albans. Of the fear of the terrible gorilla in Belle View, said to

be the most savage creature of all. Today we understand the wolves have warm family lives and gorillas are peaceful vegetarians who spend most of the day just chilling out. The really savage animal, the one that kill its own kind by the tens of millions, and remove species after species from the earth is ourselves. We participate in the wildness of all things and build walls of culture to protect us from it, but everywhere the wildness of wild nature of which we are part seeps through, symbolised by the beasts of the thick green forest and deep dark waters which haunt our darkest dreams. Every so often we will project those images onto some real animal

such as the gorilla, or onto the 'terrible others' among ourselves. That's when the real slaughter

Jennifer Westwood and Jacqueline Simpson. *The Lore of the Land: a guide to England's legends from Spring Heeled Jack to the Witches of Warboys*. Penguin Books, 2005 £30.00.

This huge 900+ page coffee table book is bound to become the standard source book for English legends for many years to come. It is an (old) county-by-county guide to legendary stories, tales of ghosts, boggarts, witches, fairies, folk explanations for landscape features and general tales. Wherever possible the stories are traced back to their original sources, and one can see how in some cases they grow in the telling, or how many classic ghost stories depend on literary sources. These authors are among the pioneers who have tried to liberate folklore from its former obsession with prehistoric or pagan survivals.

That being said, from the Magonian perspective of contemporary visions and beliefs, the coverage is rather light. There are a couple of accounts of phantom hitchhikers, a reference to the Surrey puma which ignores the much wider gamut of modern day mystery big cat stories, and a one off mention of the little blue man of Studham common. Yet there is no discussion of modern UFO stories at all, yet these must be the most ubiquitous of modern folklore. There is also a dearth of stories of English water monsters.

Though antique folklore of the mines such as knockers are included there, there is no mention of modern factory or office folklore, the lore of the railways and canals is missing, there are no ghost planes, no legends of the World Wars or the Cold War. There are no legends of half-way modern personages, or of crime. Needless to say there is nothing of the folklore of the many immigrant descended communities in England.

This gives a view of folklore that is essentially something rural and 'olde-world', something which apart perhaps

from obviously touristically inspired fakelore, is dead and gone. By and large folklore is presented as something quaint, remote and safe, and quite suitable for nice coffee table books.

Of course, the authors will, and do, argue that much modern folklore lacks the element of rounded story, it deals

with memorates of ambiguous experiences, without rhyme or reason. So might traditional folk stories however. Modern day story tellers such as mediums and psychics are well able to produce traditional sounding tales to account for peoples uncanny experiences. Of course as society globalises stories increasingly have international, rather than a purely local character.

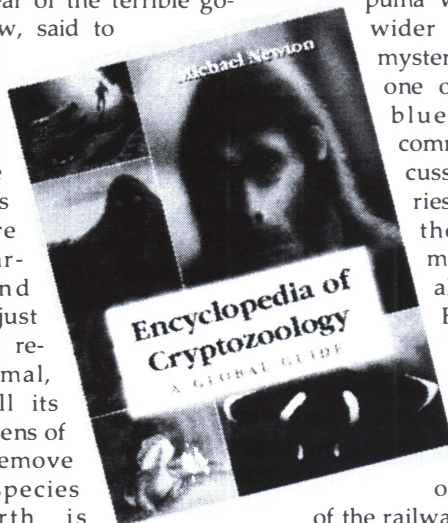
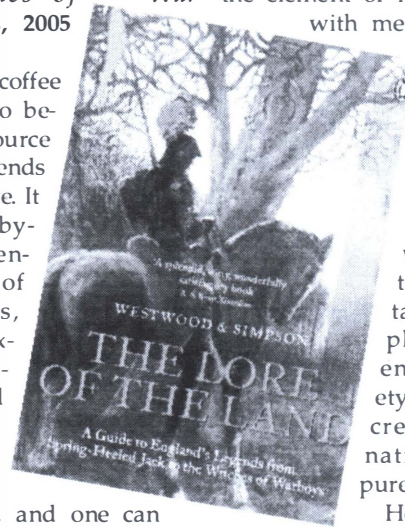
However, though this is implicit in the way that many traditional tales of attached to many different localities, there is probably an underestimate of the role that the mass media of the day, chapbooks and broadsides, had in disseminating traditional stories. It is not unknown for the contents of one generations carefully gathered and prettified book of county folklore to be recycled as the oral lore of the next.

Nevertheless we can get hints from even these old stories of how narratives can be used in a non literal fashion. For example the author's point out that motifs in tales such as headlessness or huge luminous eyes, act as a metaphor for the supernatural. Possibly many of these tales are used as a sort of off the peg shorthand to indicate numinous experiences which cannot readily be put into words.

Paul Screeon. *Crossing the Line; trespassing on railway weirdness*. Heart of Albion Press, 2006, £14.95

Paul Screeon will be best known to Magonia readers as the editor of *Folklore Frontiers*, a long established magazine of urban legends, wild rumours, forteen eccentricity and scantily-clad young ladies. Also predominant in its pages is evidence of the editors fascination with trains and railways, and staunch defence of this interest. For instance there are frequent denunciations of imaginatively-challenged journalists who use 'trainspotter' as a universal term of derision.

This book manages to combine both of Paul's interests in one volume, with



what is perhaps the first comprehensive survey of railway folklore. It's not surprising that something which has been a part of our lives for so long should have developed a wealth of legend and tradition, but it is surprising that it's taken so long for such a collection to be published.

One of the reasons is touched on a few paragraphs back in Peter Rogerson's review of another book on folklore, *The Lore of the Land*: "By and large folklore is presented as something quaint, remote and safe, and quite suitable for nice coffee table books." There is no room in this conventional view for a folklore which is based in a modern, industrial and urban background.

Little in Paul Screeton's collection of railway folklore is likely to make the coffee-table books, certainly not stories of fellatio in crowded trains and underwater sex in the Channel Tunnel!

But of course the key to folklore is that it expresses basic human concepts in terms which mean most to the people who transmit it. So that within this collection of ostensibly 'modern' stories, the great themes of legend can still be seen. Many nations have a legends of a great king, who never died, but sleeps in a cavern with all his knights, ready to return in his nation's hour of need - Alfred, Charlemagne, Wenceslas, Arthur have all filled this rôle, and the theme appears here as the legend of the Strategic Reserve.

A passenger falls asleep on the last train of the day, misses his station and is not noticed by the train crew. When he awakes he is in an unknown shunting yard, or in a tunnel, and surrounding his train are dozens, maybe hundreds of steam locomotives, carefully mothballed to be brought out in a time of national emergency, when the National Electric Grid is disabled.

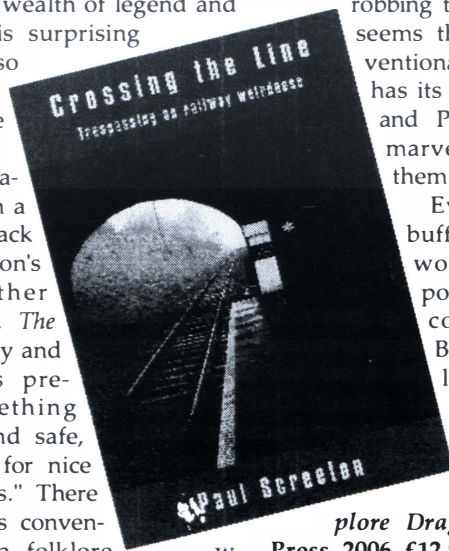
There are even geomantic overtones to railway lore, with lines being cursed by being cut through 'fairy hills', or power being leached from power lines as they cross the site of a megalithic stone avenue. And was the Box Hill tunnel really aligned so that the rising sun shone directly through it on Brunel's birthday?

Locomotives buried under football grounds or walled up in viaducts like Kray gang victim; a relative of the

Phantom Gasser o Mattoon turns up on Italian trains in the 1990s, anaesthetising his victims with a gas pumped under the doors of sleeping compartments, before robbing them of their luggage. It seems that every facet of conventional 'coffee-table' folklore has its parallel in railway lore, and Paul Screeton has done a marvellous job in collating them in this collection.

Even 'alternate-history' buffs will find something worth contemplating: the possible influence of the collapse of the Forth Bridge in 1879 on geopolitical events in the 20th century.

John Rimmer



Richard Freeman, *Explore Dragons, Heart of Albion* Press, 2006, £12.95.

Good heavens, another Magonia, another Richard Freeman book on dragons!

Freeman is associated with the Centre for Fortean Zoology, and has a strong 'paws and pelts' approach to mystery animals, believing that although many reports of bigfoot, anomalous big cats and other out-of-place or legendary creature are the result of imagination or misinterpretation, there remains a core phenomenon of actual existing animals which are unrecognised by conventional science.

While this may well be a possibility for man-sized creatures in the jungles of Borneo, or even for a small population of feral big-cats in Britain, how does something so obviously mythical as a dragon fit into this? Although Freeman does not claim that winged, fire-breathing creatures are flying around in Britain today, he does give accounts of dragon-like creatures being seen in historical times, including sightings from Wales in the nineteenth century, and suggests that some accounts might be folk-memories of Viking invasions. He also gives first-hand accounts of dragon encounters from across the globe.

The easiest way of accommodating these data is to take the classic 'literary criticism' approach, and simply regard them as stories, to be analysed as you would a work of fiction, comparing it to other examples in the same genre. I had always regarded dragon legends in this way, but this book convinces me that such stories might well have an origin in actual experience, like UFO accounts, and we now see, children's imaginary companions. But as to there being a 'core phenomenon', I rather doubt it.

John Rimmer

<< Continued from Page 2

And now we come to the crux of the argument: "Not all early ufologists agreed. If they had, there would have been no entity named 'ufology'". And, The Pelican might add, we'd all be better off for it! Because this is the real impetus behind the semi-humorous slogan 'Make Ufology History'. Ufology started off as history, an attempt to claim for a raw, new subject a history that was never really there. It began as a subject that was looking for something to study. The stories that were emerging in newspapers and on radio were not enough in themselves to sustain the wide public interest that the subject needed, so a broader perspective was required. Fort's works became a storehouse of references which ufologists scouring it for individual cases to prove that UFOs had a history, and they went back earlier and earlier to claim more and more anomalous 'oddities and enigmas' into the ufological database. We can see how the same technique has been used in an unsuccessful attempt to create a historical background for the crop circle phenomenon.

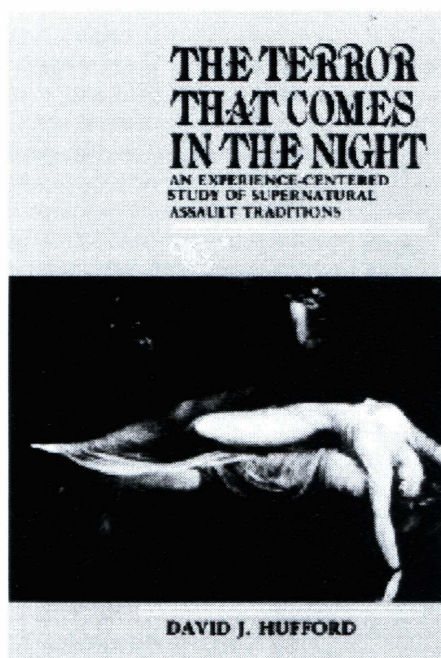
The more that historical Fortean data became linked to ufology, the more contemporary anomalies also attracted the attention of ufologists, reflecting the range of reports they found in Fort and elsewhere. Clark gives the example of M. K. Jessup who introduced Fortean skyfalls, archaeological mysteries and a range of other 'oddities' into the subject. This led on to a kind of ufology that involved "all-encompassing paranormal speculation" which challenged the ETH, and resulted in "magical thinking which could only relegate ufology even further to the edges".

So with the sceptics on one side and the occultists and demonologists on the other, there arose the need to rediscover the core UFO phenomenon. Here Clark is clear what this might be: "such hard-core evidence as instrumented observations, radar/visuals and landing traces". Of course, every single one of these has problems of its own, as is shown in the case Clark now raises as an example of a case that has received 'concentrated scientific attention' - Trans-en-Provence. He claims this case has "impressively documented anomalous effects apparently tied to an unknown, advanced technology." In fact, it has nothing of the sort. It's a single witness case, with some alleged physical traces, which were poorly investigated by people who, whilst they were impressively qualified, had little

Experience of the type of investigation they were meant to be undertaking. For a first rate analysis of the problems with Trans, I recommend the article 'Trans-en-Provence, when science and belief go hand in hand' by Eric Maillot and Jacques Scornaux. (1) There seems to be nothing in the Trans case which would rule out a deliberate hoax, or a practical joke which got out of hand.

But cases like Trans (and even more so, the allegedly multi-witness Trindade Island) are essential to the concept of the 'core phenomenon'. In Clark's definition this is something which "as far as we can judge ... comprises structured craft with extraordinary performance characteristics and humanlike and humanoid crews" which to me is a pretty clear acceptance of the ETH. The part of the quote I have indicated by an ellipsis contains an interesting qualification: "as far as we can judge from the limited evidence available to us", which is fair comment, but continues: "in good part because of science's neglect of eminently investigable data". It's not made clear just what this data is, or why science should choose to neglect it. In the case of the Trans-en-Provence case the data consisted of soil and vegetation samples which were analysed, producing inconclusive results, and ending with the apparent claim by some investigators, including Jacques Vallée that the fact that nothing seemed to have happened to the soil was indicative that a physical UFO had been present!

In attempting to further identify a 'core' phenomenon, Clark draws a distinction, which I would certainly not argue with, between an 'event' phenomenon, and an 'experience' one. One of the key analyses of the 'experience' phenomenon is Hufford's classic work on the 'Old Hag' (2). This describes an experience – the sense of being assailed by a non-corporeal entity whilst asleep – which is shared by many people in different cultures. A number of physiological mechanisms for this experience have been offered, but their ability to explain all cases has been questioned, and while the basic experience – the 'core phenomenon' – is widespread, there are complex cultural overtones to individual cases. Clark points out that such experiences are "truly, profoundly mysterious, and their cause or stimulus is unknown". Broadly true, but to some extent I would challenge the latter part of the statement. Although the exact mechanism of individual experiences can never be definitively explained, there is enough evidence to suggest a broad



Hufford's influential book, whilst welcomed by many anomalists, was more controversial amongst folklorists by suggesting that many 'supernatural' traditions had an origin in actual personal experiences

outline of what is involved in such experiences as the Hag, linking it with such states as sleep paralysis, although it is impossible to 'explain' individual experiences definitively. And in this issue of Magonia, Mike Hallowell presents a fascinating preliminary study which brings something which has traditionally been dismissed as 'imagination' or 'fantasy' into the category of 'experience event'.

Obviously, such experiences are controversial, by the very fact that their cause or stimulus is unknown, and this allows Clark to take a swipe at 'conventionalist opinion' (a.k.a. 'pelicanism') which he claims dismisses them as "misperceptions, lies, and mental disorders sometimes invented on the spot for the purpose". But if such experiences cannot be dismissed so easily, and we accept that they have some causative principle, we are still confronted by observations that "do not translate into anything that transcends testimony and

memory".

Clearly Clark does not believe that this applied to UFOs, and that there is something there that *does* 'transcend testimony and memory', presumably the radar/visual, physical evidence and multi-witness cases which seem never to work out quite as they are meant to. And, Of course, in many cases the so-called physical evidence is itself dependent on testimony and memory. The soil and plant samples in the Trans-en-Provence case have no evidential value in themselves without the testimony of the sole witness; the value of the photographic evidence in the Trindade Island case is dependent on the testimony of a small, compromised, group of people and the clearly incomplete memory of two others.

So is the UFO phenomenon so different from other puzzling experiential phenomena? Clark himself seems to suggest that there might be a 'core phenomenon' behind Sasquatch as a "race of (biological) hominids, the product of evolutionary processes, cousins to humankind, and intelligent enough to conceal themselves in the vast wilderness of the Pacific Northwest", with the bizarre accounts of hairy hominids in less likely places (including, according to Peter Rogerson, Colwyn Bay) being a 'secondary correlate'.

Could there then be a 'core phenomenon' behind such experiences as non-corporeal childhood companions? Mike Hallowell suggests there might be. I rather doubt it, although he presents one multi-witness case that would be considered good evidence if presented in a UFO context, and the consistency of testimony across a range of cultures is no less, possibly even more, convincing that the often culturally-specific UFO testimony!

The search for the 'core phenomenon' as exemplified by the 'structured craft' is the Holy Grail of ufology, and as in the case of the other Grail, it seems that it can only be tracked down through codes, hints, suggestions, fading documents, 'sincere testimony' and malleable memory.

References

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